SACRED DANCE GUILD

JOURNAL

FALL 1998

VOLUME 41, NUMBER 1

CLEVELAND ROCKS! CLEVELAND ROCKS! CLEVELAND ROCKS!

SACRED DANCE GUILD FESTIVAL '99
July 18-22, 1999

Summer is over, school is starting, leaves are changing and everyone is busy... as if it ever stopped....

So let's think fun and plan ahead for Festival '99.

The site, Cleveland State University located in the heart of beautiful downtown Cleveland will provide the perfect setting for our theme, **Dance Forth the City of God.** The focus of festival is to transform ourselves through dance and prayer in order to build community.

Some of the Main Presenters who will lead us through our transformation will be:

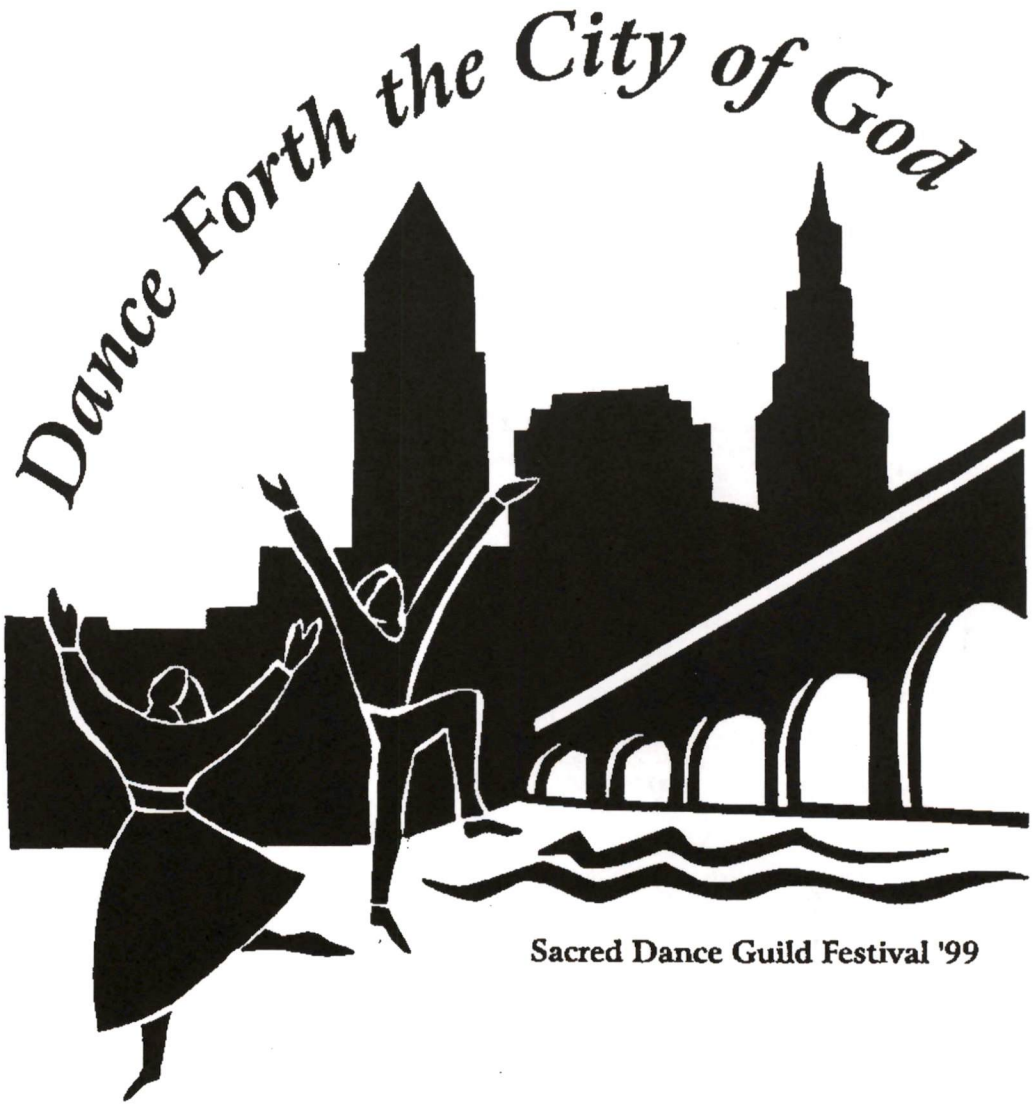
- Rev. Bob VerEecke, S.J., with Jamie and Nichole Huggins presenting "May our Tears be Turned into Dancing"
- Kathryn Mihelick with Andrea Shearer and Leaven Dance Company presenting "Inside Out and Upside Down" To Fuel Renewal in the City of God
- Linda Thomas Jones presenting African dance.

Come rock, roll, jump, skip and dance with us into the new millennium.

Requirements?: Your best Elvis imitations and bare feet!

For more information contact Annie Zahradnik, Festival Director at 30005 Elgin Rd., Wickliffe, OH 44092. Home phone: 440-944-2278. E-mail AZahradnik@a9l.com.

Stay tuned to upcoming *Journals* for more information about Festival '99.



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The JOURNAL is the official publication of the Sacred Dance Guild, a non-profit international corporation, founded in 1958, and providing members with information and opportunities for enriching their faith through movement and dance.

Reprints of articles in the JOURNAL by permission of the Editor only. The Directory is intended only for the use of Guild members in carrying out the activities and purposes of the Guild.

Policy Statement. The Sacred Dance Guild recommends and encourages its members to list their SDG affiliation when presenting workshops and performances. However, the Guild letterhead, logo and name are to be used only in connection with official Guild business and activities, as endorsed by a Chapter Board, Regional Director or Guild Executive Board. Official Address: Sacred Dance Guild, Post Box 335, Bemis Court, Marlborough, New Hampshire 03455. Headquarters Address: Joann Flanigan, 1004 Brook Ridge Circle SE, Huntsville, AL 35801. Editor's Address: Toni' Intravaia, 201 Hewitt, Carbondale, IL 62901. © Sacred Dance Guild, Inc. All rights reserved. ISSN 1043-5328.

Corporate subscriptions to the JOURNAL are available for $15. Membership to the Sacred Dance Guild is also available for the following rates: U.S. membership $28 per year, $50 for two years; Canada $31 per year, $56 for two years; Overseas $31 per year $56 for two years; Life Membership $800. Membership includes the JOURNAL published three times a year; RESOURCES IN SACRED DANCE - An Annotated Bibliography (1991), available separately for $10 plus $2.50 postage and handling; Calendar of Events; Membership Directory, membership in your area Chapter or Region; reduced rates at National Festival, area workshops, and conferences of reciprocal organizations. Send subscription, bibliography or membership order to the Headquarters Address: 1004 Brook Ridge Circle SE, Huntsville, AL 35801.

Deadlines for the Journal: August 15, November 15 and March 15. Deadlines for the Events Calendar: The same as for the Journal. Articles of 500 words or less, dance activity, chapter/region/membership news, letters and black and white photographs should be sent by deadline dates to: Sacred Dance Guild Journal, Toni' Intravaia, Editor,201 Hewitt, Carbondale, IL 62901.

President's Message

Dear Friends:

What a grand Festival we enjoyed at Salt Lake City - about 270 of us! Sue Carter and Judy Barnett and their wonderful committee deserve accolades from all of us for giving so much of their time to make the week absolutely memorable.

Many thanks to Toni' Intravaia who choreographed our 40th Anniversary Celebration event with a two-hour program featuring dances, teachers and choreography of the Sacred Dance Guild for the past 40 years. It was a special occasion for me as I danced in three pieces that evening. The first was an adapted version of Ted Shawn's choreography of the Doxology, assisted by soprano Ann Blessin; later on I led Mary Jane Wolber's Processional; and with the assistance of Ann Pomeroy, Barbara Tener, Rebecca Wright Phillips and the Board-at-Large, about 30 of us danced "Lord of the Dance" as the finale to a grand evening.

At the Annual meeting, we voted to make Margaret Taylor-Doane an Honorary Member of the Guild. Margaret's work and writings have been well known to me since my days (and nights) of study at New York University for my M.A. in Dance and Dance Education.

My thanks to Barbara Tener, outgoing Vice President, and Kathryn Mihelick, outgoing Resource Director, for the years they devoted to these positions. Barbara has agreed to be the next President of the Northern California Chapter, and Kathryn is already very busy with the faculty committee for Festival '99 next July in Cleveland. Beautiful plaques, designed by Judy Barnett and featuring our SDG logo, were presented to Barbara and Kathryn, along with one to Mary Jane Wolbers, our Parliamentarian, a past president and a long time worker for all of us.

The latest Survey form has been distributed to all members by Joceille Nordwall, former Nominating Committee Chairperson. Please respond to this important survey in order for the Guild to have the latest data available to the President (for appointments) and the Nominating Committee (for elective offices). Some of these positions are for a one year term, while others are for short commitment. We need you for a smooth running Sacred Dance Guild, so please reply right away.

Please note that the October Executive Board meeting has been changed from Huntsville, Alabama to the Washington, DC area, to be hosted by Program Director Sue Johnson of Annandale, Virginia.

Brochures! Call, write, E mail or Fax Director of Regions and Chapters Denise Dovell for Brochures. Denise has a few thousand to distribute.

Other concerns? Contact me by E Mail (JoannSDG@aol.com) by Fax (256-880-8628) by phone (256-881-8171) or by mail at 1004 Brook Ridge Circle, Huntsville, Alabama 35801. And please note the new area code!

Dancing Blessings, Joann

SACRED DANCE GUILD BENEFACTORS

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Editorial

Before Festival '98 and the 40th Celebration freshness wears off, I want to reflect on the happenings at Salt Lake City. We certainly had a large gathering of two hundred fifty or more. We had excellent sharings in teaching, in discussions, in performance and in recalling our roots. Usually I do a column on my wanderings among all the activities. This time I thought it would be wise to do a condensed log.

If you readers know me, you already know that I don't drive and I get lost until I establish fixed points of travel. It took me two days to do that at SLC, but then it was wonderful to walk from the dorm to either the student center or to the Virginia Tanner Studio or to basements in other dorms. Liturgical dance has taken on a new and expanded wonder! (If you have never been to a Festival, do save up and try for one.) I found myself at technique classes, choreography classes, music classes, "culture" classes, comedy classes, scripture classes - of course all related to dance in praise. To a member of forty years and your editor, it was indeed revealing. Thanks for this particular Festival surely belongs to Sue Carter and Judy Barnett.

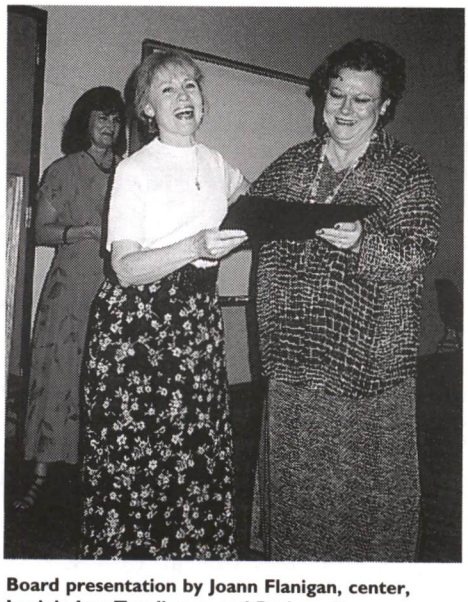
As for my part in celebration of "40 Years," I felt as though I was merely the pawn as God played through our time. My two hours went by so quickly. As I told my listeners, since I was no good at jokes, I would have the forty years with dance. And I did. Joann Flanigan with Ann Blessin danced Ted Shawn's "Doxology" from 1940; Noel Divino, Emily Bogus, Sarah Reeves and Celia Peterson danced a section from Doris Humphrey's "Shakers" from 1930, Alex, Carolyn, McKenzie and Sue Carter danced Margaret Taylor-Doane's "Lord's Prayer", Matteo danced three ethnic versions of the "Lord's Prayer" and "Lord of the Dance", Mary Jane Wolbers and group danced "O Worship the King", Forest Coggan led and danced with volunteers "David's Psalm of Praise", Carla DeSola with group danced "Miriam's Dance", and the Celebration closed with the Board dancing to "Lord of the Dance."

During the few days there was a "roast" of Carla DeSola (see Letters to the Editor) and a Silent Auction that brought in scholarship funds. I am going to request Danielle Henjum Smith, the pamphlet editor, to run the "A Time to Remember" as there were requests for copies at the Festival of our forty years' celebration.

Knowing that most of the Sacred Dance Guild readers have taught or participated in camp activities involving religious dance, I felt it would be a great theme for the Winter Issue "Sacred Dance at Summer Camps."

Please continue to send your news, as well as dates for the Calendar of Events, to Toni' Intravaia, Editor, 201 Hewitt, Carbondale, Illinois 62901, and your news from regions and chapters to Director of Regions and Chapters, Denise J. Dovell, 947 Mt. Rose St., Reno, NV 89509. The deadlines are August 15, November 15, and March 15. And, dated and identified archival materials should be sent to Priscilla Richardson.

May God's Fall Colors in Nature bring Gentle Joy to your dance.



Board presentation by Joann Flanigan, center, Lovinia Lee Tomlinson, and Barbara Tener.
Photo by Colley Ballou.

Karen Josephson, left and Carla DeSola at the "roast.
Photo by Colley Ballou.

IN THIS ISSUE

Festival 99 1
From the President 2
Editorial 3

"The Meaning of the Sacred Dance Guild"
- Stand Firm - Trust Spirit by Jeannine Bunyan 4
- A Song of Skyloom by Shirley Blancke 4
- Dancing Spirit by Jennifer Karin Jordan 5
- The Gifts of Guild Membership by Mary Jane Wolbers 5
- Visions II Retreat by Vivian Nicholl 6
- Oh, Oh Canada! by Deborah Bethell 7
- Karen Josephson by Karen Josephson 7
- Renew A Right Spirit Within Me by Christy Edwards-Rnning 8
- Witnesses by Heather Peck Stahl 9
- Come, Bring Thy Cup by Jeannine Bunyan 9
- The Star in Our Hearts by Deborah Bethell 9

More SDG Member's Ideas 10
Youth Corner 11
Letters to the Editor 12
Chapter News 13
Recommended Reading/Videos 13
Sacred Dance Activities 14
Memos from the Minutes 15
Calendar of Dance Workshops 16

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Stand Firm — Trust Spirit

by Jeannine Bunyan

A few days before Easter my pastor came with a request for a dance. He wanted a piece that would bring the congregation from Good Friday to Easter Sunday. In spite of shortage of time, my mind instantly began conjuring up images of groups at the cross, the grave, and Easter morning. However, pastor had in mind a solo by me. He wanted to be sure the dance was "professional" since there would be many once-a-year visitors!

While struggling to maintain my composure, I asked what music he had in mind. The surprising answer came - he wanted the dance done *in silence* - to function as "emotional transition" between the announcements and the actual beginning of Easter Sunday worship. Talk about a challenge!

My mind raced with what I would like to have said to "educate" my pastor such as, "With advanced planning for choreography, meaningful dances can be done by congregation members." Fortunately the thought also came that this pastor was actually taking a risk to bring sacred dance to a reluctant congregation. So I answered, "Well, let me pray and see what Spirit sends me."

One whole day went by with the challenge foremost in my mind, but no answer came as to how a solo could depict mob scenes. That night as I lay abed in a panic-prayer, slowly, gently I felt myself wrapped in a soft, warm, purple blanket of inspiration. The idea of a 9' x 45" drape was born.

The dance began on the chancel with a pose in a cross position, with purple fabric draped in its usual fashion upon the "Cross." This pose was held, in silence, for so long a time that the congregation became uneasy wondering what to expect. Then the cross became the wounded and finally dying Christ. The drape became the "Earthquake" which separated congregation from a view of Christ.

What emerged was "Death" sinking into "Hell" (coming down three steps). On this lower level was the "Struggle" with jabs, kicks, and swirls taking place under the drape, until a calm "Resurrection" set in with gentle rising, undulating movements back up to chancel area where the drape dropped to floor.

Next the stone was rolled away to reveal only the "Shroud." With the realization that "Christ has risen," the shroud was gently lifted and used to wipe away tears, and then it swirled to "Bless" the congregation on each side of the aisle during a joyous exit.

This is a description of my thoughts on the choreography. Added blessings came from remarks of viewers who told me they saw exactly what was meant. Some saw Peter's denial, others saw the three Marys at the tomb, still others saw Jesus on the road to Emmaus.

What I finally saw was that, by requiring the dance to be a solo, Spirit had required the congregation to become the mob, with each person bringing their unique spiritual understanding to the scenes. Dear friends, be not dismayed by seeming lack of understanding on behalf of your pastor or congregation. Stand firm in your calling to Dance Ministry and trust Spirit to bring you adequate inspiration. Jump for Joy!

From Ruby Wiles:

Silent Auction for Scholarships at Festival '98, Salt Lake City raised over $1450.00. It was the best auction ever!! Donations are still welcome. Please send to Ruby Wiles:

Thanks to everyone who contributed items and who bid. I am always so touched by what people bring. I can tell the items come with lots of love.

A Song of the Skyloom

by Shirley Blancke

(from Matthew Fox's *Original Blessing*)

"...Then weave for us a garment of brightness..." Tewa prayer

The Skyloom Sacred Dancers would like to share with you some of their more precious memories of involving people in creative dance liturgy.

In the early eighties, a small group of women in the Boston area came together to foster spiritual growth through creative dance and liturgy. An interfaith and intergenerational group (which includes men when possible), ***Skyloom*** has choreographed liturgies and given workshops in churches, a monastery, a men's prison, and for AIDS healing services throughout New England and beyond. We were organizers for the Sacred Dance Guild Festival in Boston.

Whenever possible ***Skyloom*** tries to involve a congregation in movement so that dance in their church is not just a performance by outsiders. A workshop beforehand helps to open people up, and a small Episcopal congregation in Vermont once exceeded our wildest hopes. As a symbol of God's covenant in Genesis, we floated a huge rainbow silk over their heads. The whole congregation, seeded with people from the workshop, took to the aisles, and clinging to the rainbow danced with it all around the church.

Circle-dancing is another excellent way to involve people not used to moving, and we have circle-danced with monks and with inmates. One time, at a clergy celebration, we recited from the mystics and led two hundred people in a spiral labyrinth dance under a full moon on the prairie. It was an incredible experience of death and rebirth as we became disoriented in the spiral and were reborn into a candle-lit circle. Circle-dancing can also heal. A woman who objected to women priests accepted a new female chaplain after a day spent dancing with her.

Perhaps our greatest challenge came when a Unitarian church asked us to dance on the subject of death. We took the prophet Ezekiel's story of how God would transform a valley of dry bones into a new nation of Israel, and wriggling out of shrouds and death masks to the sound of knocking bones, we came together in a *via transformativa* dance of community. Another time, to illustrate a theme of inclusiveness, spurned people threw themselves against a human wall until it collapsed and joined them.

Sometimes churches pigeonhole dance as only for children, so it can be really liberating for a congregation to see gray-haired women run at full tilt down the aisles!

The Gifts of Guild Memberships

by Mary Jane Wolbers

With fond memories of Festival '98 fresh in the minds and hearts of a record number of participants, it is good to "count our blessings" for the existence, energy, and support of the Sacred Dance Guild. For many members, it is more than a sacred dance connection; it is life-long friendship and bonding with kindred souls. Consider giving Gift Memberships for birthdays, holidays, any special occasion or as "Thank-yous". You will be introducing recipients to a unique organization with many benefits. (Contact Carla Kramer, Membership Director, 2558 Delaware St., Wickliffe, OH 44092.)

The Sacred Dance Guild Bylaws guarantee members in all categories (regular, student, senior, sponsor, group and life) the privilege of voting, receipt of the *Sacred Dance Guild Journal* and all general mailings, and reduced registration fees at workshops and Festivals.

In addition to these specific benefits, all members may serve elective and appointive positions, committees and task forces and attend annual meetings. The Guild solicits member input through surveys, retreats and correspondence; the annual Directory and *Journals* facilitate contacts.

A highly cherished aspect of membership is the opportunity to network with others who share interests, activities, and challenges in sacred dance. The *Journal* provides opportunities to list and report events, and place advertisements at nominal cost. Membership entitles listing in the *Registry of Sacred Dance Guild Companies, Groups, Soloists.* Regions and Chapter structures enhance networking at the local level.

The organization's Publication Project generates resource materials. An extensive *Bibliography*, available at reduced rate to members, is constantly updated and expanded in recognition of the field's growing body of knowledge. Global networking is accessed through the Guild's membership in the World Dance Alliance. Its Collegial Affiliations protect professional interests, fostering cooperation and exchange with others in related organizations.

Educational opportunities are provided at the annual Festival and activities of Regions and Chapters, Master classes, workshops, sharing sessions, and worship services respond to the need for development of choreographic and performing skills, spiritual growth, and integration of dance as an expression of faith, and interaction with varied cultures, faiths, age levels and abilities. Members are eligible for Festival Tuition Scholarships generated by the Memorial Endowment Fund, and incentive grants from Chapters.

The Guild and its members work together in an unrivaled effort to promote sacred dance, enhance the quality of dance as a religious art form and to be a source of enrichment, inspiration and support. It began as a small group of ministers, dancers and choir directors. Forty years later, it averages 650 members annually to whom many services are rendered. As the saying goes, "We must be doing *something* right"! See you at the 50th?

Finally, to the many who have given so much time, love, energy and financial support to the Guild's success....a heart-felt THANK YOU. Words fail; shall we dance to that?

Invite new members to join/share our expertise as a mentor in Guild workshops, retreats, Festivals/support the Memorial Endowment Fund. Blessings!

Taiko Drummers concert at Festival '98.
Photo by Colley Ballou.

Dancing Spirit

In Love, Praise and Honor of God

by Jennifer Karin Jordan 8/97

I dance in the rivers of God's great land.
Hallelujah I sing with the Angel Praise Band.
I'm free at last and I dance to shout,
I'm out of prison and alive no doubt.
Like David I dance to praise my Lord.
He gives me steps I'll never be bored.
I move my body with joy and delight.
Signs I've healed and share my might.

For I was locked inside from trials of the past.
Now I've let those go, my spirit soars at last.
I'm a dancing spirit and it's God I please.
I gyrate and move, like a flirt in a tease.
Some moves from studio classes I've taken.
But mostly it's God who sets my body quakin'.
Arms lift over head, hips swirl, legs kick.
Choice of moves is infinite, spirit take your pick.

So I dance with joy and do peaceful moves.
To express bliss I've found as I rock in the grooves.
Shake, rattle, roll dancing spirit never dies.
When I tire, it commands, "Wake up, go on, strive."
So I dance in God's kingdom on His many dance floors.
Happy to be there moved beyond past wars.
For I live a life of peace from the blessed Holy Spirit.
Joy reigns, I embrace it, though it's new and fear it.

God says, "Stop, listen to the dancer in your soul.
She's your free spirit self, so rejoice you're whole."
"OK," I respond, let out my joy in a dance.
Praising God with passion in the beauty of my prance.
Dancing spirit we're free, the good times have begun!
Thank You God, at last, my life finally fun!

Visions II Retreat

by Vivian Nicholl

On the weekend of June 27-29, 1998, Sacred Dance Guild members gathered at the St. Joseph Christian Life Center in Cleveland, Ohio (the Festival '89 site) for the Visions II Retreat. Agenda items listed for discussion included topics such as Festival and scholarship concerns, student membership issues, a Mission Statement revision, as well as addressing responsibilities of Directors, other officers, and an Executive Secretary. A report summarizing the results of this retreat, including three proposals and seven recommendations, has been forwarded to the Executive Board by the Retreat Facilitator, Vivian Nicholl, for action.

In addition to the series of meetings throughout the weekend, participants joined together in a few dance activities. A worship service was held on Saturday afternoon which began with the processional "O Worship the King." Mary Jane Wolbers taught participants her choreography earlier in the day also in preparation for the upcoming 40th Anniversary celebration at Festival in Utah. The St. Joseph Christian Life Center provided a lovely lake-side setting with comfortable accommodations, delicious food, and plenty of space (but not enough time!) to enjoy the fellowship among this group of dancing friends. Gratitude and heartfelt appreciation is extended to all members making this a part of their life, especially to Cleveland area members Carla, Sr. Barbara, and Annie for their key role in acquiring the facilities for our use.

This retreat was organized two years ago following that of Visions I Retreat held at Joyce Smilie's La Paloma in Connecticut in June of 1996. The challenge at that time was to explore ideas which would lead us into the 21st century, spurred on by the all-member survey "choreographed" by a special Task Force under the leadership of Jeanine Bunyon (CA). Denise Dovell was the Retreat Facilitator and members attending developed proposals and recommendations which were discussed and implemented by the Executive Board.

The Guild recognizes that the efforts and outcomes resulting from retreats of this nature justify their continued pursuit. It is the desire of members who attended either of these Visions Retreats, as well as others keeping abreast of the effort, to repeat this again in the year 2000. Members interested in recommending a host site and their ability to help facilitate, register, etc., should submit proposals to the Executive Board for review. Member participation in the Visions quest is paramount to the function of the Guild. Input from every "dance" of life belonging to this organization is vital!

A Time to Dance With Children

by Rosalie Bent Branigan

After ten years in Louisiana as Director of Dance Ministry at Broadmoor United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge, I am a brand new resident of New Mexico. My husband and I are building a new home outside Albuquerque which has been designed by our architect daughter. My husband retired last July, but I have emphatically stated that I have not. At present I am looking for ways to become involved in the dance community in the area and have accepted the job of Regional Director for the Sacred Dance Guild.

Having worked with children for over 40 years in both music and liturgical dance choirs, in the studio and as an Artist in the Schools, I am convinced that sharing faith and values with children through the arts is probably the most important thing I can do. It has been said that Christianity (or any faith) is always only one generation from extinction. Certainly in today's world, children need us more than ever before.

Since very little choreography for children is published, I have written a curriculum for young children containing educational material and dances suitable for hospitals, nursing homes and schools. In addition, I have over 50 individual choreographies for children, youth and adults. These were made available at the Festival along with a number of handouts. I offered a master class about working with children and adults were invited to observe and then remain for a discussion of resources and techniques.

Sacred Dance Guild Scholarships

It is time to plan for Ohio festival '99, and time for you to apply for a scholarship. We have scholarships available to help SDG members attend Festival '99 in Cleveland, Ohio. Our funds are growing but are still somewhat limited. We will be able to help a few members get to the festival.

Please send an application, as noted below, to Kathryn L. Hamilton, 1924 Sarah Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203. Deadline for receiving applications is April, 1999. All applications must be postmarked by **April 1, 1999.** Those receiving scholarships will be notified by May 15, 1999, of funding available.

Sacred Dance Guild Scholarship Application

Any member of the Sacred Dance Guild is eligible to apply for a tuition scholarship for Festival '99. It is important that the awards benefit not only the recipient but also those with whom the recipient is involved on a local, regional or national level. Scholarships may also be awarded to an individual in recognition of contributions currently being made to sacred dance.

Recipients of scholarships will be expected to assist with various tasks at some time during the Festival. Please complete the form below and mail by April 1, 1999 to:

Kathryn L. Hamilton
1924 Sarah Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15203

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State_____ Zip _____

Phone_____

Note: All of the following must be completed. If application is not complete, it will not be processed. Please use separate sheet to answer the following questions:

1. Describe your current activities in sacred dance.
2. List briefly any training you have had pertinent to your work in dance and worship.
3. How do you think you will benefit from attending this National Festival?
4. How would you plan to share your experiences at the Festival in your local or regional area?
5. Will you be able to attend the Festival whether or not you receive a scholarship?
6. What is your current involvement with the Sacred Dance Guild?
7. Please ask one person who is familiar with your work in sacred dance to write a letter of recommendation.

This letter must reach Kathryn L. Hamilton by April 1, 1999.

CONGRATULATIONS
CHUCK YOPST, LAKESHORE CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVE
MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE ACHIEVEMENT
IN DANCE/MOVEMENT PSYCHOTHERAPY
AND DANCE THERAPIST REGISTERED CERTIFICATION

Oh, Oh Canada

by Deborah Bethell

They're here....waving Canadian flags, playing Jeopardy the Canadian way and drumming up a storm. Ruth Richardson and Wendy Morrell make way for us Canadians in the Sacred Dance Guild with their fun, enthusiasm and encouragement!

Ruth, a palliative care nurse, is the daughter of a clergy person. Her struggle with Muscular Sclerosis only adds fuel to her undying love for expressing faith through movement and dance. Ruth presently is the Regional Director of the Ontario Region with Wendy by her side to share the load.

Wendy is a maritimer from the east. Her friendliness and hospitality bubbles over to touch everyone she encounters. With her experience in jazz, ballroom and creative movement, she is able to create comfort zones with people of all ages, enabling the spirit in them to move their unspoken prayers.

Both Ruth and Wendy have directed and produced wonderful children's musicals about such characters as Noah and Daniel. What was truly amazing is that they are able to get people of all ages to dance and sing!

When Ruth and Wendy attended the Boston Festival, they discovered other Canadians from the Ottawa Region there. Once home, they organized a workshop to bring everyone together. Anna Douthwright was the facilitator. This was a huge success which led to the formation of the National Capital Chapter. The two women are very active members of their church, Bells Corners United, and are extremely active in promoting sacred dance in the city.

Every other Wednesday night, Ruth and Wendy create a space in their church for people to explore their faith through movement — Devotion Through Motion. Local guest facilitators are invited to lead people through various movement meditations. The Dynamic Duo also co-ordinates annual weekend workshop where such guest facilitators as Joann Flanigan, Barrie Gibby and Celeste Schroeder have come to share.

Drumming was very successfully introduced to the dance community by Ruth and Wendy inviting actual African Drummers to lead and teach. The Labyrinth Movement grew when this Duo got involved. Dancing the Labyrinth is a healing experience for all to share and it is their mission to make it available for all.

Through their persistence and never-ending energy, Festival 2000 will be crossing the border! Be there or be square!

Wherever there is fun, faith and fruit of the Spirit, you will find Ruth and Wendy dancing up a storm!

The Shape of Growth

by Karen Day
(from *iMpROvIsiNG*, Vol. 3, No. 4, Mar./Apr. 1998

Bursting. Change feels like that. Watching stark limbs I see tight buds, know they'll be unfolding, but I bet it feels like bursting. Full of new life, so full it stretches my skin 'til it pops open to push out a new part of me.

At this moment it's so hard to accept reassurances that the time will come. When it does, bursting on us, it's still a surprise. All winter I asked myself, my lover and the universe, "What's next?" I felt something coming but couldn't tell if it was going to be a job as a receptionist to make some extra money or a life change. I hunkered down, feeling the soles of my feet on the ground, savoring soft snow and warm fires. Dancing with restlessness.

You'd think by now, millions of years of this cycle, we'd get the message. But we're not much different from our ancestors calling back the sun, fearful that it's gone forever. "I want to feel better now, want things to change now."

Feels like sap's been running faster lately. Winter's dark waiting has given way to this - BURSTING! All of a sudden new plans, new energy, excitement and activity surprise me. I asked for the necessary changes to come to me, stayed with my body to feel and know what was coming. Was ready for spring.

The magic of the bodysoul is like the magic of spring, renewing under cover and then bursting forth with something that feels brand new but is really the only fruit that could come now from this soil, this tree. Now I'm a woman with feet on the ground, with head stretching high to catch the magic I know my blossoms will burst and die and bloom again. I give thanks.

Karen Josephson January 7, 1998

by Karen Josephson

It's about body./It's about Gianni Versace being gunned down./It's about Diana being hounded to death./It's about Mother Theresa wearing out./ It's about John Denver and Michael Kennedy and Sonny Bono having too good a time.

I have teeth, hair and eyes all over my life,/Freckles, skin and pores all over my body./Legs, breasts and fingers in proper places.

Eloise had a fake body that expired at ninety:/Plastic knees, no breasts, eye implants,/and a pacemaker heart.

It's about my body, /a woman's body./It's about menstruating and birthing/and suckling babies and menopause.

Bodies have moving parts that dance,/just as horses gallop/and butterflies flit.

I consider my body fairly well exercised, fed and healthy./But then it surprises me with a hernia, cancer, a fused stapes bone in my ear/ and a broken wrist.

The best thing about nude beaches,/is watching bodies:/None perfect,/A few close, very few,/and all beautiful in their diverse bodiness.

It's about accepting the reality of post polio syndrome/that could once more completely freeze my body, /including my voice./It's about being more trapped in my body/than the famous quadriplegic Christopher Reeves.

Bodies hurt other bodies. They shouldn't/But they do. Rape, torture, murder./Everybody knows what those words mean./(Not to mention hitting, kicking, punching, slapping, etc.)

For now my body moves/As it was meant to move,/Slowing down some, worried about the knees (too much dancing)/But at least it moves as it was made to move.

So, It's about doing it now/before Gianni Versace, before Diana, before Mother Theresa,/before Eloise, before Post-polio Syndrome, before Christopher Reeves,/before John Denver and Michael Kennedy and Sonny Bono.

Renew A Right Spirit Within Me:

How Leaders Can Encourage a Worshipful Presence in their Dancers

by Christy Edwards-Ronning

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion "Your God reigns"! Isaiah 52:7

All creation dances. The planets whirl; trees sway with the wind; the ocean ebbs and flows; and the flowers turn their heads towards the sun! Human beings also share a natural gift of dance: the twirling of toddlers, juvenile skipping, swaying of lovers, working the earth. But we humans are offered the added dignity of joining our spirits and the worshipful intent of our hearts to the movement of our bodies. We can choose to glorify God by offering our bodies as a living sacrifice of praise and proclamation! With dancing feet and shining faces, we proclaim a life-giving message of salvation, as did the bounding messenger of Isaiah. We are invited to love God and proclaim God's deeds in dance.

Prayerful Focus is Required

Such love does not come automatically. As in all relationships, such loving implies a decision to love. When we offer a sacrifice of praise with our bodies, a conscious choice to worship is required, a mindful intention to allow the Lord to be exalted in the dance we present. We who are called to lead liturgical dance must be grounded in God's Spirit and prayer; we must focus on the Presence of the Holy.

How edifying is the dancer who is grounded in prayer, who meditates deeply upon the Scriptural or liturgical texts, and who embodies a shining joy or an honest lament! But I have also seen dancers who clearly have not prayed through the sacred texts, who are neither prepared or centered in the Spirit. Such lack of spiritual focus is not fitting when we consider our high calling as sacred dancers. God has commissioned us! Through our dance we announce peace, bring good news, announce the wholeness and liberation of salvation, and proclaim to the far reaches of the earth that our Deliverer has come, and that all who call on the name of Jesus shall be saved.

The Need to Prepare

How do we live up to this tremendous commission? As leaders in sacred dance, we bear the responsibility of shepherding dancers who come to us yearning to use dance as prayer and praise. Not only must the movements have clear intent and be appropriate to the ability of the dancers, but the leader also has a spiritual responsibility. I would like to propose several checkpoints that I have used and found successful for the spiritual preparation of the dancers in my company.

Pray and Bless

I begin and end every rehearsal, and every performance, with prayer or a scriptural dance meditation. This settles my dancers into a spirit of worship and creates a "sacred place" even if we are gathered in an unfamiliar location. We also anoint and bless each others' feet and hands with oil. We pray, asking that every step and every movement may proclaim God's glory. My dancers find this to be a refreshing and empowering experience, focusing them on their Divine mission.

Examine the Condition of Our Hearts

It is difficult to dance with an open spirit when our hearts are clouded by resentment, guilt, or fear. At times it will be necessary to cleanse our hearts and ask for a right spirit by confessing our faults to God, or by confronting or forgiving someone who has hurt us. Jesus has good advice here. "When you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24). When our hearts are clean and unburdened, and our shadows are handed over to God, we will be able to be vessels of Light.

Building Spiritual Community

I am also beginning a practice of washing my dancers' feet during Holy Week and as we break for the summer. As recorded in John 13, Jesus washed the disciples' feet. He is servant of all. As a Christian leader, I must always bear in mind the examples of our Lord Jesus. I find that this simple act is a touchpoint of pastoral care that cultivates the deep bond of community necessary for a team to lead worship effectively.

Communication: Preparing the Way

Have we connected with the community in which we are worshipping? Our company hosts several Bible studies for the congregation. Themes include Scriptural references to dance, or an examination of a text with a short movement phrase or image. These studies enable the congregation to ask questions and learn more about the use of dance in worship. Many times I have heard, "I'm glad I came to your Bible Study; it helped me receive so much more from the dance."

Examine Our Intent

Liturgical dance is typically received in one of two ways—love and joy or disdain. I believe that these extreme reactions are often responses to the dancers' intent. Were the dancers there to show off their own skills, bodies, talents, and to stand out; or were they present to enhance the overall message of the worship service to glorify not themselves, but God? Are we operating according to the flesh, or according to the Spirit? It is important that all aspects of worship be God-centered, and not merely a showcase for our own abilities.

A Vessel of Light, a Proclaimer of Good News

You, too, can be a vessel of God to demonstrate the beauty of holiness embodied in sacred dance. But spiritual cultivation is required, and a sacred dance choir will probably not rise higher, spiritually, than its leader. They need you to lead them into intentional prayer and spiritual preparation that they may be fitting vessels of Light.

Festival photos
Worship photos
Press photos...
Workshop photos
Concert photos

for
Sacred Dance Guild Web Site

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Witnesses

by Heather Peck Stahl
(From *Interpreter*, February-March, 1998 Dancer Glorifies God With Graceful Movement)

"Sacred dance is an art form, a means of worship; it is not simply a performance," Bryant says.

Sylvia Bryant interprets Christian emotions and celebrates God's presence using graceful movement. The professional trained dancer has performed and taught liturgical dance for some 35 years.

"The experience of dance brings the presence of God to our consciousness," said Bryant, 57, who began dance classes at the age of 7 and has studied with such renowned dance instructors as Alvin Ailey, Martha Graham and one of the pioneers in sacred dance, Margaret Fisk Taylor.

Regional director of the North New Jersey Sacred Dance Guild, Bryant is also director there of the Sacred Dance Choir at First Church in Montclair, and director of Creative Movement at Verona Church. She travels nationwide about six times a year to lead workshops on sacred dance.

Author of the newly released book *Dancing Through the Christian Calendar*, Bryant tries to educate Christians about the significance of dance in worship. "Dance is often ignored in our churches today because of unfortunate negative connotations," she said. "But Bible passages like Psalm 150:3-6 make it clear that the worship and praise of God involves the totality of one's experience and being—both physical and spiritual," she says.

When she is not dancing or teaching, Bryant, a mother of three, is a district parent coordinator for the Montclair Public School System. The wife of a United Methodist pastor, Bryant performed at the 1984 General Conference and has directed dance programs at historic Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, and Philander Smith College in Little Rock, Arkansas. Several television stations have also featured her dancing and her choreography. Having completed graduate work in dance at Connecticut College, she said, "The ability to dance is the most beautiful gift God has given me. I try to use my talent to glorify God."

The Star in Our Hearts

by Deborah Bethell

Over 30 people of the Ottawa area in Canada met to explore the feast of the Epiphany through movement on January 25, 1997. Epiphany is the season of celebrating the visit of the three magi who followed the star in the night searching for the Christ Child. Using the meditations from Joyce Rupp's book, *The Star in My Heart*, we moved through our darkness, with the Star to guide us to the Child within.

The creative movement class in the morning was led by Patricia Bowen who helped us explore our rootedness with the earth and the Creator. Lunch was followed by a drumming workshop led by the music group, ***Raintree***, the music duo of Ian Douglas and Steve Reside. Ian composed a song for us to sing, drum, and move to. This song was about the light and dance that could never be extinguished. Next, Deborah led us into the labyrinth dancing to Aya Vegu Veya, a rite-of passage drumming song used at Festival '96 in Berkeley. We started in darkness, danced to the center and carried a candle outward. The labyrinth, 22 feet in diameter, was created on canvas by Richard and Deborah Bethell.

The day wrapped up with a Taize Service in the evening. ***Raintree*** led the chants while Deborah led the movements using Carla DeSola's choreography. We all ventured out into the darkness beneath the stars and our hearts burned with the love of God.

Come, Bring Thy Cup

by Jeannine Bunyan
from *NEWSLETTER* of the Southern California Chapter, Vol. 20 No. 1, January, February, March, 1998

Question: How can we maintain our buoyancy during times of frustration or discouragement that come to us in our ongoing Dance Ministry?

I find it important to keep three things in mind:

First - we need to remain true to our commitment to grow in knowledge of the "sacred writings" of our particular faith. In other words, we need to continue to grow spiritually in daily study, thereby keeping us close to our creative Source.

Second - we need to remain true to our commitment to friends and support community; they are our lifeline. By avoiding isolation, their Fellowship helps us stay close to the *realities* to be learned from everyday life.

Third - and most likely to be forgotten, we need to remain true to our commitment to recognize *blessings* in every experience. In our effort to stay positive, we often try to force energy that just isn't there. As dancers we naturally think in terms of movement and action. But, every choreographer knows that in every worthy dance, there are differences in tempo, even absolute stillness. This is important to remember in our "dance of life" too! Sometimes the most creatively positive thing we can do is "wait!" Find the patience to give Spirit time to replenish our energy for greater good works. We can use our waiting to examine where we've been, where we are, and where does God want us to be? Oh, my dancing pilgrims, "Come and bring thy empty cup, Let God thy reservoir fill up!" Then once again, you can — Jump for Joy!

Rev. Gwyneth Murphy, Carla DeSola, Jeanett Sawaya Lamb and Nona McCaleb at Festival '98.

A Gaelic Blessing

John Rutter, Choreography by Shelley Turkinton and Bobbi Wethington
Duke Memorial Sacred Dancers, Durham, North Carolina

DEEP PEACE* OF THE RUNNING WAVE TO YOU,
Blow forward slowly, then taking the right hand make a WAVE with your hand, wrist and arm across the front of your body-shoulder height. Open your palm and make a wide spread back across in front of our body on TO YOU, making eye contact with your congregation.

DEEP PEACE OF THE FLOWING AIR TO YOU,
Lunge to the right, blowing toward the right side of the congregation...on FLOWING AIR wiggle your fingers and sway your arms gently and lightly across and upwards and over back to your right side....on TO YOU again open the palm of your left hand and sweep it across making eye contact as you do so.

DEEP PEACE OF THE QUIET EARTH TO YOU,
Lunge to the left, blowing towards the left side of the congregation...on QUIET EARTH bring up the right finger to your mouth as you gently bend down to the earth, and with both hands, scoop up the earth, let it trickle between your fingers, and spread it out once again. TO YOU is motioned with both hands, palms up, facing forward, raising up together as you stand. Once you are up, open your hands and arms to encompass everyone.

DEEP PEACE OF THE SHINING STARS TO YOU,
Lunge forward, blowing out, and quickly bring both arms in towards center, cross, and with big jazz hands, on SHINING STARS open and circle up and around-TO YOU is again to the front.

DEEP PEACE OF THE GENTLE NIGHT TO YOU,
Lunging to the left, blow out, then on GENTLE NIGHT fold left arm around head, and then right arm, dropping head little and closing eyes, opening right hand, palm up and sweeping it chest high across body on TO YOU.

MOON AND STARS, POUR THEIR HEALING LIGHT ON YOU,
Make a round "moon" with your arms (like 5th position ballet arms) and raise up on your toes as you bring your "moon" up and around to other side, and down to center. On HEALING LIGHT your right hand, fingers together, fingertips straight up, does Holy Spirit sign-up high, and down low (gently raise up arm with flickering fingers, and bring back down). Your left hand is cupped under this gesture as a sign of "holding up" or "supporting" the flame...

DEEP PEACE OF CHRIST, OF CHRIST....
Lunge and blow to the left, bring up arms and on CHRIST make nail marks in the middle of each palm, then swing gently to the right side and make nail marks again...Make sure your arms are high enough so the congregation can see what you are doing-and that your palms are open so they understand the nail marks...Over exaggerate.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD TO YOU,
On LIGHT, again big jazz hands, crossed, up and around.
WORLD - Three fingers make "W" and circle your "W" hands around one another as you bring them up and down in front of you in a "ball"...TO YOU is facing front, both hands, palms up-out towards the congregation.

DEEP PEACE OF CHRIST TO YOU.
Blow outwards-frontwards-EYE CONTACT! Spread your hands outwards...OF CHRIST-cup both hands in a crown (heels of hands together, fingers points of crown) and triumphantly raise straight upwards with a majestic, strong motion. TO YOU, once again gently bring down hands and spread them wide to include your entire congregation...end in a prayerful pose.

*Cup your hands around your mouth, and blow a "breath of God" over your congregation during DEEP PEACE. Make sure you make eye contact, gently blowing forward and then letting your hands spread outwards and over the congregation...Let them feel the gentle, flowing, peaceful movement-somewhat like a blessing gesture, but you are sending them on their way with the assurance that God is with them, everywhere they look, and the light of Christ should shine brightly upon their faces!

(Note: Every sacred dancer has a great responsibility...ask the Holy Spirit to give you strength and guidance as you plan out your dance ministry. All of Bobbi's and Shelley's Choreography is for the glory of God alone...with the purpose of bringing sisters and brothers closer to our Lord Jesus Christ.)

Identity Dance

by Danielle Henjum Smith
(from *Moving Together*, Vol. 8, No. 1, Fall 1997)

Here is a way for people to introduce themselves through movement rather than just by name...

Have everyone stand in a circle and allow them a few minutes to choose a movement/gesture which represents them, or that has a special meaning to them, or represents how they are feeling. They needn't spend a lot of time deciding - spontaneity is best for this.

Going around the circle, each person shares a movement with the group — without talking. Go around the circle twice in this way. The third and fourth times around the circle, everyone joins in the movement. The fifth time around, the participants again share their movement alone.

The group now knows the individuality of each person in the circle, just as if the people had introduced themselves by name, and at the same time created a group dance.

As possible variations:

*If the participants are "new" to expressing themselves through movement, do the Identity Dance at the end of the gathering as part of a closing ritual. This will allow the students to explore and become more comfortable with movement before choosing one to represent themselves.

*Have everyone say their name while, or just after, they share their movement during the fifth time around.

*If the Identity Dance is shared at the beginning of the event, then it could be repeated toward the closing. Dancers then have the chance to adjust their movement based on development during the session, or as a way of creating a "full circle" to the event.

*If the event has more than one session (a full weekend event, a series, etc.), the Identity Dance can be repeated at the beginning of each session.

Costume Idea

by JoAn Huff

A costume idea I picked up at Georgian State Dancer concert: Measure a sash two yards by three to four inches wide. Fasten at the right shoulder so that four to six inches of the sash hang in front. The long end goes down the back, loops low around the left hip and then is pinned at the right hip so that six to eight inches of the sash hang down.

Suggestions for Sharing Dance with Children

by Lois Kreider and Danielle Henjum Smith
(From *Moving Together*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 1998)

*Give children much praise and encouragement. Children don't have too many opportunities to dance in groups, and may be unsure of this rare opportunity. Giving them plenty of positive feedback for any and all efforts will make it a memorable experience for them. The most important fact is that they are there and trying to participate, not whether their steps are always correct.

*Allow the children an opportunity to be creative. Children are told at an early age that their creations may not be "good enough." We need to continue offering children plenty of non-judgmental opportunities to express themselves.

*While discussing with the children a specific season of the church year (Advent or Lent, for example) ask the children to develop a movement for how they feel during this season or how their journey might look in movement. I have successfully used this approach with 5th grade through high school students. Pre-school children through kindergarten are generally more creative if asked to originate a movement related to something they have experienced - home, school, playground, friends. For example, in the time of Pentecost Jesus goes away. You might ask the children how they have felt when a friend goes away.

*If time allows, create an item to be used with the dancing...instrument, scarf, etc. A simple project that is well planned out and set up ahead of time, can take just 10-15 minutes. The children can then take the item home, and it will be a reminder of their dance experience. Try to arrange for another adult or a teenager to assist during this time.

*Offer very clear direction to the children. Ambiguity will leave them wondering what to do, and what their boundaries are. Decide what is most important for the children to know to help them, and stick by those directions. (And also know when it will be okay for children to make the decisions.)

*Children do best with "lively" dances. However, don't be afraid to include a slower, more contemplative movement during the session. When the appropriate environment is provided, children do understand the reverence needed for such activities. It is important that the adult(s) be openly and honestly prayerful while working with children and help them formulate feelings during prayer time. Dimming the lights, beginning with a brief centering prayer, lighting a candle, etc., can help the children focus, just as it does for adults. (I recently led a sharing of "joys and concerns" using candles during an inter-generational service. I was concerned if the children would be able to "handle" carrying the candles. Instead of being clumsy or disconnected from the activity, the children were the most reverent of all the ages.)

*Remind children that they are to respect each other's movement and creativity — that means that they should not do anything which makes it difficult for other people to express themselves (i.e. falling down when the group is holding hands, talking loudly or out of turn so that others can't hear instructions, laughing at another's movement, etc.)

*Before you lead an education session for which you don't know how many children will be attending, review the material considering how the number of children will affect the session. Some activities will take more or less space, or time, or materials depending on number of participants. Be prepared as best you can.

We Were Blessed With the Presence of Happy Children at Festival '98

by Bobbi Wethington

Beautiful Weather!
Beautiful Scenery!
Beautiful Dancing!
Beautiful Children!

It was such a joy to experience festival this year with little children participating in all the week's activities, and with lots of teens hanging out in groups (exhausted!) and getting to know one another. It was a pleasant surprise to see their smiling faces wherever I went and a delight to see them working so hard in their morning classes and afternoon workshops.

Our children are our SDG future! I was privileged to teach the young ones for a one-hour workshop and I was so proud of them! They were interested in the material and soaked it up like sponges. They cooperated and listened to directions, and they were very sincere in their efforts to learn about sacred dance. They wanted to be there and their behavior reflected this desire. They learned the choreography quickly and I wish they would have had the opportunity to share their piece with everyone at festival!

The teenagers did a fantastic job in the faculty concert with Danny and his family, and had fun doing it. One look at their faces with delight and determination growing in their eyes said everything as they danced to the drum beat. It was an experience they will never forget. My daughter Caroline is still dancing the steps around the house and singing the chant/song that Danny taught them!

The point of this article, besides letting everyone know how wonderful it was to see so many children and youth participating in Festival '98, is that we need to keep this trend going at festivals. Please bring your children with you! Bring your teenagers and their friends! Bring your church dance groups! We need to keep offering educational classes for our children at SDG festivals as well as classes for our youth. I want to thank the Utah Committee for having the insight to do this and to encourage the Cleveland Festival Committee to consider and remember OUR CHILDREN as they plan for Festival '99. Praise the little children, (and the big children!) for they are ALL precious in God's sight!

Photo by Colley Ballou

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Carla DeSola, August 11, 1998

Dear Sacred Dance Guild,

My deepest thanks to Toni', Karen, Lucy, Arthur, the Utah team, and all SDGuilders who so lovingly and secretly plotted the "roast."

It was wonderful, as was the whole week. That night, I felt at the center of a loving family ritual, and I realized anew how we are indeed an extended family. The unexpected words of appreciation, humorous and dear memories shared, and the extraordinary rite of passage (thank you Mary Sunbeam for your inspiration!) are all dancing within me. All aspects of the event are precious, and will subtly change my sense of self. (Including the strangest: hearing the beautiful words of the Wisdom text, with a pink flamingo on my head! How could that be? Did it really happen?) Part of the ritual was reserved for later, as I met people in the hallways, and read notes in the beautiful UTAH book, and all the letters Lucy collected in the box from the east coast...

Though I often help create liturgical rites, I am peculiarly shy about celebrating personal rituals for myself, often not even telling anyone when it's my birthday! So what you all did filled a real gap. I've noticed that sometimes the creation of dances has taken the place of a needed ritual. At the time of creation, I am unaware of why the dance emerges with such urgency and relative ease. Upon reflection, I see how it coincided with needs in my life, both physical and psychical. I think my dance, *Woman with the Flow of Blood* fits into that category. Perhaps also my newest, *Marguerite Porete,* as I struggle with current trends in the church.

It is wonderful to be loved. With your love, I will grow into "mothering".

Carla - "Mother" Carla

From Judy Mandeville, Spokane, Wa, June 1998

Dear, dear Margaret (Doane)...God connected us through an amazing set of circumstances in January of 1997. I was asked to teach the first course in *Liturgical Dance* in Whitworth College's 100 year history. Though I'd taught Sacred Dance for years and indeed had my Christian Conversion experience while dancing thirty years ago. I had no idea there was any network like the Sacred Dance Guild, or any written material about it. The Sharing Publishing Company gave me some texts and kept repeating Margaret Taylor Doane's name.

I finally asked who she was. There was a long pause...and then "You mean to say you've never heard of Margaret Taylor Doane?" "No"..and then he proceeded to tell me all about her. The astonishing news came that she lived HERE in Spokane!!!...I felt very blessed. I went to see her a few days later...She graciously consented to give a Master's class for the Whitworth Liturgical dance class...that began a marvelous relationship between Margaret and Whitworth. She has taught a class each term....I invited some of the faculty to participate in one of her classes and they were "blown away" by her passion and faith and power in gesture.

Margaret and I soon organized Spokane's First Sacred Dance Festival.... I invited about five or six groups....Zion Fellowship, New Covenent, A Time to Dance, Gonzaga University, Harvest Christian Fellowship, Camp Farthest Out. Jolie Monesterio graciously offered Gonzaga Chapel (also other churches had offered possible sites), so we decided on Gonzaga because of its central location....Margaret was the catalyst of it all. That day we met, I told her of the various groups in town that I was aware of, and she said "Oh, we must have a festival around Eastertime!" So you see - Margaret Taylor Doane, at the tender age of 88 (then) is still very active in the Garden of Sacred Dance. She plowed the ground decades ago and continues to tend the flowers and dig new trenches where seeds can be planted and blossoms nourished. What a joy she is to my life!

A bit about myself...Since we moved to Spokane eight years ago, I began a Home School and Pre-School Dance Ministry called "B & B" - "Ballet and Biblical Concepts"....I am adjunct at Whitworth College teaching Liturgical Dance. A wonderful group sprang up after the first January term in '97. The students created the group "Jubilation" for outside ministry as well as campus edification and enjoyment...

I have done some deeply meaningful movement studies with ***Women in Crisis*** at a homeless shelter. I'm excited to see where that leads! Also I presented some workshops in movement and worship for "Jubilati", also a "Japanese Conference" ...also a workshop at "Satori," a camp for academically gifted children....

I hope one day to meet some other Sacred Dance Guild charter members! I enjoyed meeting Doug Adams when he was here...I had a tremendous week with Carla DeSola and Rosalie Branigan in Houston...Sincerely and with a kindred love for the dance.

In Remembrance and Service

by Mary Jane Wolbers

The Memorial Endowment Fund of the Sacred Dance Guild was established in memory of Ruby Henderson, a dear friend from my early days of involvement with the Guild. More recently, two other valued friends, Virginia Lucke and Robert Storer, have joined Ruby's celestial dance and have been added to the list of those memorialized by this Fund. My regular contributions to the Endowment are a tribute to these treasured members and a means of supporting the scholarships that are made possible.

Over the years, my personal donations have been augmented by fund-raisers, Silver Teas, and a variety of volunteer dance services (leadership training, choreography, workshop consultations, performances). My choirs and I do not accept reimbursement for services; any gifts we receive beyond expenses incurred go the Guild's Memorial Endowment Fund. Such sources are always welcome, but by nature have not been consistent enough to satisfy my commitment to the cause.

In 1974, I decided to initiate a project which would be on-going and guarantee a source of funding for my gifts to the Endowment. With the help of an artist, I had notecards designed, printed and made available for purchase by anyone wanting them. The design by Rhonda R. Rosenblatt is for my exclusive use. It may not be copied or reproduced without penalty of copyright violation. The cost of printing and mailing is deducted from payments received; the balance goes to the Fund.

The notecards are printed on fine quality white stock and come with matching envelopes. The design is printed in purple, the inside is blank. Artistic credit and the words "designed for the Memorial Endowment Fund of the Sacred Dance Guild" are inscribed on the back. They are sold in sets of 10. For use in large quantities as Christmas and Easter cards, wedding invitations or other special events, advance notice is advised.

I appreciate the opportunity to remember the past and enliven the future by contributing to the Fund. The visions of Ruby, Virginia, and Bob will be sustained by those whose work is enabled through Guild scholarships. Others who feel equally committed are encouraged to devise plans which will enable them to contribute to the Fund, be it out of savings, fund-raisers, and/or estate planning. (Mary Jane Wolbers, 111 South Green Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301)

CHAPTER NEWS

New York/SW Connecticut Chapter

Judith Rock presented "Response Time" May 7-17 at the 78th Street Theatre Lab in New York. This was a one-woman, one life in two acts on the theme "What happens when an artist hits the street as a cop?"

The Dances of Hadassah were offered in the program "Hadassah Kissed by the Gods" by the ***High Frequency Wavelengths*** with guests Donald McKayle, Mary Anthony and Sophie Maslow on June 7, at the Joyce Soho, New York City.

Carol Sundquist, Tuckahoe, NY reports her choreographed liturgical works "A New Way", Berkeley, Ca; "Reaching Out", New York; "Godspell", NY; "Come Celebrate", Staten Island; "Summer Me, Winter Me", NY; "Free", NY; "Strutters", NY; "Salsa/Merengue", NY. As dancer she has appeared in many pieces not only in New York but also in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

JoAn Huff, of the ***Chi Rho Dancers*** in Oswego, NY was the dance instructor for "Come Fly with Me," the 1998 meeting of Phoenix Performing Arts Conference held at Robers Wesleyan College in Rochester, NY July 30-August 2.

Potomac Chapter

The Potomac Sacred Dancers, an outreach of the Potomac Chapter, presented 3 dances in the August 16 worship service at Westwood Baptist Church in Springfield, VA. The Chapter's Fall workshop will be sharing from Festival '98 and will be held on September 26 at St. Luke's United Methodist in Falls Church, VA. The annual pre-Advent Carol Dancing will be held on November 22.

Southern California Chapter

On June 20 the Southern California Chapter held its summer event "Dance: A Fresh Look at Our Chapter" in Camarillo.

From Elaine Friedrich, Santa Barbara: Erlyne Whiteman, past president of the Southern California Chapter and Artistic Director of the ***Westmont Windancers*** described the program "DansArt", presented in April at the Porter Theatre, Westmont College, as a "chronology of dancers depicted in the visual arts, from cave paintings to the post-modern period."

Constitution Chapter

Linda Telesco reports from the ***Spirit Dance*** in Lyndhurst, NJ: In April they danced the Biblical Songs for Palm Sunday at the First Congregational Church of River Edge; "Were You There" and "There is a Balm in Gilead" for Good Friday at the Rutherford United Methodist Church; "Morning Has Broken" on Easter Sunday; and they danced a processional at worship followed by a full concert at Highland Mills Methodist Church in New York.

In May the ***Spirit Dance*** offered procession, meditation and benediction dances at King of Kings Lutheran Church, Mt. Lakes; danced a full concert following prayer service for the Women's Communion Breakfast, Community Church, Ho-Ho-Kus.; danced at May Crowning, St. Anne's Villa, Morristown; danced Pentecost service, Nauraushaun Presbyterian Church, Pearl River, NY; joined combined choirs, instrumentalists, and soloists for the annual Hymn Festival at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, Ridgewood. Linda and dancers, led the congregation in a simple movement prayer to "Spirit of the Living God." Many said participating in this piece was deeply moving, and some were in tears.

In June and July ***Spirit Dance*** offered a processional, a spiritual, an Irish Blessing and a waltz at a multi-cultural evening at Our Lady of the Lake Church, Verona; danced at the Reconciliation Service and Closing Liturgy of the NJ Catholic Charismatic Conference, Somerset. Spirit Dance director Linda Telesco choreographed the musical "Jesus Christ Superstar" for the Chester Theatre Group.

Kay Troxel, Chapter Representative: Christie Edwards-Ronning and Kathleen Pettycrew of ***Mustard Seed Dance*** were awarded Chapter Leadership Development Grants to attend the Avodah New York Summer Workshop directed by SDG member JoAnne Tucker. Christie and Kathleen will share their workshop experiences with the Chapter in the Spring.

Kay continues: Past Chapter President, Dana Schlegel, is recovering from major back surgery. He has been called to a newly-created position at the Willow Street, PA, United Church of Christ as Minister of Music and Congregational Life. His home address will remain the same.

And, two Chapter members have been appointed to positions with the national SDG. Lenise Spracher will be serving as Resource Director and President Karen Clemente will be a member of the Collegial Affiliate Committee. Colley Ballou, Nutley, NJ, SDG Public Relations Director, was presenter at the Chapter's annual Fall Workshop, October 17.

Canadian National Capitol Chapter

Deborah Bethell: The Summer Arts Festival was held in June with Raintree leading in drumming, dancing the labyrinth and closing with Taize prayers.

Rocky Mountain Chapter

From Judy Rutledge: New officers are President, Judy Rutledge; Vice President, Sally Goerner; Secretary/Treasurer: Dory Duncan; Chapter Representative: Kim Fields; Hospitality: Ann Blessin; Members at Large: Mary Adams and Judy Blair. The Chapter held "Come Dance With Us" a workshop led by Marjorie Pumphrey in January at the Montclair United Methodist Church, Denver. And in March the Chapter presented an African workshop led by Kathy Hays.

Oh-Penn Chapter

From Sr. Barbara Eppich, Cleveland Heights: Barbara spent a week with conference on the mystic Hildegard of Bingen. "I have lots to share regarding her creativity (900 years ago) and she lived to be 81 years old in the 12th century."

From *Swedish Press,* Anders Neumueller, Editor 1294 West 7th Ave., Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6H1B6

Sv
Den sakrala dansen
håller på att återinföras i svenska kyrkor. Det är Maria Rönn, präst i Skarpnäcks församling som har utfört ett pionjärarbete med att introducera "heliga danser" i kyrkor, stift och församlingar över hela Sverige.
Den första dansgudstjänsten i Sofiakyrkan på Söder blev visserligen anmäld till domkapitlet av en kvinnlig präst som kände sig frågande inför gudstjänstreformen. Men den sakrala dansen ökar i popularitet särskilt bland kvinnor som söker sig till kyrkan via dansen.

(SDG Editor's Note: Joceile Nordwall had this translation made.)

Sacred dance is being reintroduced in Swedish churches. It is Maria Ronn, minister in Skarpnacks congregation, who has pioneered the introduction of holy dance in churches, congregations and parishes all over Sweden.

The first dance service in Sofia Church in the southern part of Stockholm was reported to the Archbishop by a woman minister who felt uncomfortable with the change in the service. But sacred dance increases in popularity, especially among women who seek a connection to the church through the dance.

RECOMMENDED READING/VIDEOS

New Publications...

Through the Sacred Dance Guild's Publications Project, three new publications have been assembled to celebrate the wisdom of sacred dance artists from communities across the country, various belief systems, and dance backgrounds. These booklets were created from articles and choreography printed in the *Journal*, between 1988 (Vol 31, No 1) and 1998 (Vol 40, No 3).

The Healing Ways of Sacred Dance: Personal, Communal, Global: Experiences, ideas, and reflections of 13 dance artists; 32 pages; $4.00 plus shipping cost.*

Choreography: Guidelines and Dances: Six simple dances, and four articles on choreography; $3.00 plus shipping cost.*

Perspectives on Sacred Dance: Theological, Spiritual, and Artistic Views: Twelve sacred dance artists share their wisdom for contemplation and growth; 36 pages; $4.00 plus shipping cost.*

To order, send name of publication(s) and total cost* with your full address and phone number to: Danielle Henjum Smith, SDG Publications Project Coord., 5001 Oakley, Duluth MN 55804.

*For each order, add .70 (seventy cents) for shipping costs. Checks or money orders can be made out to "Sacred Dance Guild."

SACRED DANCE ACTIVITIES

Missouri

May 22-24 at Huttig Chapel, Maryville University, St. Louis, Alton Wasson led "Move into Summer!", a contemplative dance workshop.

On June 5-7 at the Huttig Chapel, Maryville University of St. Louis "Visions of Light," creating personal imagery for self-discovery, was led by Jennifer Judelsohn.

New Hampshire

From Elsie Keeffe, Concord: Twenty-two dancers (adults and children) presented a Sacred Dance Service at the First United Methodist Church, at Machester. Elsie is the director of the Youth and Adult Sacred Dance Choirs. At the Wesley United Methodist Church on June 7 the group also shared liturgical dance.

New Jersey

Sylvia Bryant reports: The Sacred Dance Guild of Northern New Jersey held a workshop "Celebrating Pentecost" on May 30 at the Verona United Methodist Church.

Sylvia, regional director of Northern New Jersey, presented "The Passion Through Sacred Dance" at the Caldwell United Methodist in March.

New Mexico

Surgite, a sacred dance company participated in Palm Sunday services at Cross of Hope Lutheran Church, and Easter Sunday services at St. Thomas of Canterbury Episcopal Church, First Congregational United Church of Christ, and All Saints Lutheran Church, all in Albuquerque. The company danced at First Christian Church, Santa Fe, on Good Friday and Pentecost. In May the company was on tour in Pueblo, Colorado. The company director, Keri Sutter, was on the faculty of the Delight in the Arts Camp and Camp Challenge (American Diabetes Association) in June. Mini-concerts at retirement centers and workshops for Sunday School classes and Vacation Bible School classes filled July and August.

North Carolina

From *Improving Life* Vol. 3, No. 5, May/June: Karen and Bill, the editors, were married on Sunday, July 26. (Ed. Note: We of the SDG offer you congratulations and love!) Before that date the two were busy: In April Karen led "Circle of Caring" and storytelling for the Mama Bay Camp. Contact Improv at Bend of Ivy Center was led by Brian Jaudon. In May Karen danced at St. James Episcopal Church, Black Mountain. Karen led worship at the circle of the Wildly Inclusive God and in June Karen and Bill danced and led movement in the worship service at Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church.

Bobbi Wethington, Regional Director reports that Ginny Going and Tom Henderson, directors of *Colleagues* are dedicated to encouraging men and women to work, play and be together in ways that are productive, life-giving, and joyful and to recover the unity of body, mind, heart, and spirit in individuals and communities. Both certified *InterPlay* leaders, dancers and teachers and directors of *Off the Dead End Ensemble*, they lead classes and events throughout the year.

Bobbi reports that she has moved from Duke Memorial UMC to Southern Pines UMC and that she is beginning to form new sacred dance groups, one for children and one for youth. She will continue dancing in NC and leading workshops. She reports Shelley Turkington has taken over the leadership of the three groups at Duke Memorial.

Oregon

Power and Praise Dance Company: In June they presented dance in the "Hour of Remembrance" at the First Presbyterian Church, Salem; "Illuminations of the Sacred" at an Interfaith Celebration of the Arts, First Christian Church, Portland; dance for Pentecost Sunday in May at the Milwaukee Lutheran Church; in April participated for the Holy Eucharist and Baptism at the Church of the Holy Spirit, Battle Ground, WA; in March for the Community of Faith Meeting, Vermont Hills United Methodist Church; Holy Week Services at the Tigard United Methodist Church, Tigard; Holy Week Services at Montavilla United Methodist Church, Portland; Pleasant Home United Methodist Church in April for the Good Friday Worship; and at Holy Redeemer Parish in Portland for the Liturgy. A Bulletin contained the following description: "We welcome this Sunday the "Power & Praise Dance Company" who will participate in the 10:00 Liturgy. Each dancer is a member of the Sacred Dance Guild, an international organization devoted to dance in worship. They hold that life benefits from the restoration of the human body as an instrument of reverence, moral discipline and spiritual realization and the dance acts as a ritual which changes the consciousness of participant and observer alike. We appreciate their coming to Holy Redeemer."

Tennessee

Donna Hardy and Donya Walker performed "We Are" from Sweet Honey in the Rock's *Sacred Ground*. The theme of the program and exhibit at the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, Knoxville, was "Faces of My People: Caring for Others."

International News

JoAn Huff reports: Anke Kilster, a long time member from Mannheim, Germany called International Regional Director recently to give an update on sacred dance activity in her country. The Christian Guild for Dance in Liturgy and Spirituality was founded in July, 1997. Anke is president of the 30 member organization.

She reports that dance is being done in both the Catholic and Protestant churches by 200 sacred dancers in Germany and other countries where German is spoken (Austria and Switzerland). Anke has been involved in sacred dance for over 10 years. This past year she took a leave from her regular teaching job to promote sacred dance. She has presented demonstrations and authored a booklet which includes a directory of 150 sacred dancers in Germany. Anke had hoped to attend Festival '98 in Salt Lake City, but was unable to make the trip. She sends greetings to all of the Sacred Dance Guild.

Attention to Forthcoming Festivals

Festival '99: Cleveland, Ohio

Festival 2000: Canada

Festival 2001: Hawaii

Festival 2002: New Hampshire

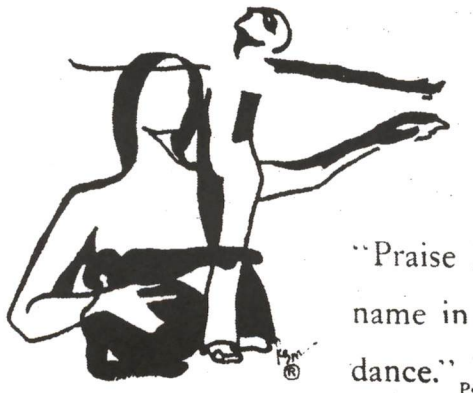
Reciprocal Affiliations

The Sacred Dance Guild has collegial status with the following organizations. This is a reciprocal agreement whereby members of the Guild may attend activities of these organizations at the same fee their own members pay (proof of SDG membership is required). Members of these organizations may attend Guild activities in the same way.

American Dance Guild, 31 W. 21st Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10018 (212) 932-2789.

International Liturgical Dance Association (ILDA) of NPM (National Association of Pastoral Musicians), 3215 Bellacre Court, Cincinnati, OH 4528-5005 (513) 451-6746.

National Dance Association, American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1900 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091 (703) 476-3436.



"Praise His name in the dance." Psalm 150

NOTE CARDS

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MEMOS FROM THE MINUTES

January 31, 1998, Honolulu, HI: Eight members attended. Reports received and discussed: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Director, Corresponding Secretary, Program Director, *Journal* Editor, Director of Public Relations, Director of Development, Resource Director, Visions II Retreat, Bookkeeper, Parliamentarian, Festivals '98, '99, Nominations Committee, Pamphlet Project Committee, Investment Advisory Committee.

The 1998 election will be by mailed ballot.

Action: appointments of four Regional Directors were approved; Rosalie Branigan (MN, AZ)., Li Chu Chang (Taiwan), Dana Marschalk (GA), Deborah Mauldin (AL). The Publications Project and Budget/Brochure for Festival '98 were also approved. Invitation to hold Festival 2001 was extended by the Hawaii Region and enthusiastically accepted.

May 2, 1998, Huntsville, AL: Nine members attended. Reports received and discussed: President, Vice President and Financial Advisory Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Director, Corresponding Secretary, Program Director, *Journal* Editor, Director of Public Relations, Publications Project Coordinator, Parliamentarian, and Festivals' 97, '98 and '99. Topics for consideration at Visions II (from Virginia Huffine and others) were discussed; they will be forwarded to Vivian Nicholl, Facilitator. Responsibility for editing and sending Board briefs to the *Journal* will be added to the Parliamentarian's job description.

Action: The slate was approved. Funding not to exceed $1,000.00 was approved to help defray expenses of the 40th Anniversary Celebration program at Festival '98. Addition of Executive Discretionary Fund as a line-item on the budget was approved. The Hawaii Chapter was provisionally approved pending an e-mail/phone vote. Leadership Development Grants for non-Festival Educational pursuits was not approved.

Further details, and/or copies of reports filed at Board Meetings are available to members by request to the President.

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RESOURCES IN SACRED DANCE

We are beginning to update "Resources in Sacred Dance" a publication compiled by the Sacred Dance Guild, Kay Troxell, Bibliography editor. It is an annotated bibliography of books, booklets, articles and serial publications or journals, media (film, audio and video tape) and reference sources. Also listed in Resources are libraries with photo and media collections, and other dance/dance history associations and fellowships.

The bibliography is compiled for those who dance or lead sacred dance groups. It is not only for clergy and laity but for anyone who is seeking in-depth studies in the field. It is a valuable resource for those who are researching, writing, or who are curious to know more about the history of sacred dance. The bibliography gives understanding of the various approaches through sharing experiences.

If you have read a particular book that you like, or if you have published a book that you would like everyone to know about, please let us know. We will need the title, author, name of publisher, date of publication, price, and if it is still in print - if you know. We also need a very brief, succinct description of its contents. The same criteria would apply to videos, films, and audio tapes (also if they are for rent or sale).

Please send your information to: Iris J. Stewart, 765 Cindy Lane, Petaluma, CA 94952, (707) 765-6508; Fax: (707) 776-0783, e.mail: iris @iscweb.com

We still have a small supply of Resources in Sacred Dance. If you would like to order one, please contact: Kathryn Mihelick, 2292 Lynwood Drive, Stow, OH 44224. Cost: $10.00 + $2.50 postage and handling.

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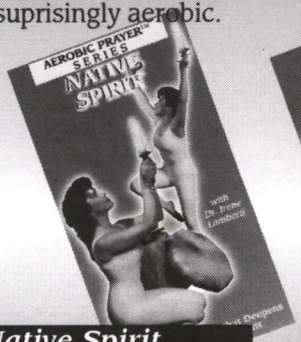

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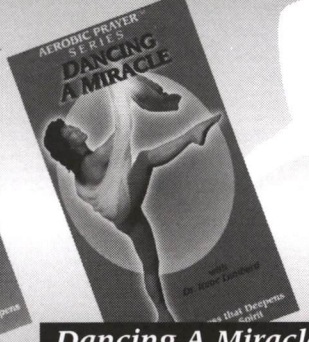

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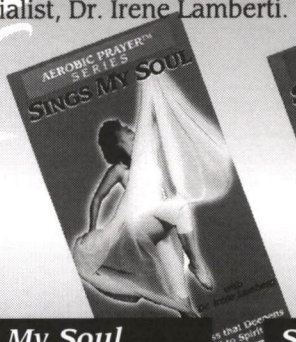

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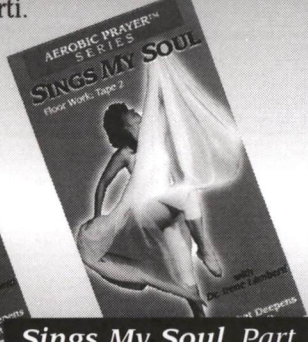

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CALENDAR

October 9-11, 1998 - St. Louis, Missouri "Contemplative Dance Workshop" led by Alton Wassan of Hampshire College, Amherst, MA. Contact: Mary Fran Hopkins, St. Louis, MO, 314-434-5094.

October 24-25, 1998 - Hammonton, NJ: "In the Potter's Hands", ***Mustard Seed Dance Company***. Contact: Christy Edwards-Ronning Tel 609-567-0901.

November 2-30, 1998 - Hammonton, NJ: "Dancing Five Types of Prayer" Five Mondays, Mustard Seed Dance Company. Contact: Christy Edwards-Ronning Tel 609-567-0901.

November 6-7, 1998 - Movement and the Spirit "Caring for the World" with Carla DeSola and Miriam Therese Winter, Center for Continuing Theological Education. Contact: Duke Divinity School, Box 90966, Durham, NC 27708-0966.

November 7, 1998 - Workshop "Psalms and Prayers" with Rosalie Branigan, clinician at United Methodist Church, New Castle, PA. Contact: Nancy Wiand, 117 W. Sheridan Ave, New Castle, PA 16105, Tel. 412-654-9312.

November 15, 1998 - "Open the Door to Liturgical Dance" with ***Spirit Dance*** at Our Lady of the Lake Church, Performing Arts Series, Verona, NJ. Contact: Linda Telesco: 201-997-6767.

November 18-22, 1998 - "Taking it to the Streets," International Evangelism Arts Conference, Barbados, WI. Contact: Marcia Bryan-Weekes, Caribbean Regional Christian Dance Fellowship, 73 Waldorf Ave., Elmont, NY 11003.

July 26-30,1999 - "Creating Sacred Dance," with Carla DeSola. Contact: Pacific School of Religion, 1798 Scenic Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709.

Executive Board Meetings

Fall Executive Board Meeting: October 10, 1998, Washington, D.C. Area hosted by Sue Johnson

Winter Executive Board Meeting: January 23, 1999, Hawaii

Spring Executive Board Meeting: May 1, 1999, Huntsville, Alabama

Board-at-Large Meeting: Cleveland, Ohio

Annual Board Meeting: Cleveland, Ohio

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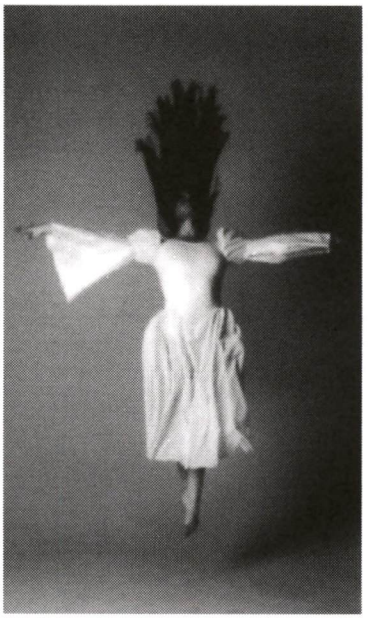

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